

GRDCs Regional Cropping Solutions Network (RCSN) meeting for the Kwinana West Port Zone was held on Wednesday 14 February 2018 (3-6pm) and Thursday 15 February 2018 (8am-12) at Cervantes Pinnacles Resort. This was the first RCSN member meeting for 2018.

Meeting attendees included: Tony White, Gary Lang, Roger Newman, Ben Wilson, Ty Fulwood, Bill Moore, Blayn Carlshausen, David Sermon, Daniel Dadd, Jon Hasson, Chris Wilkins (Western Panel), Jo Wheeler, Manjusha Thorpe, Julianne Hill (Coordinator), Cindy Power and Helen Ablett (Project Support). Apologies were received from Graeme McConnell and Trevor Syme.

Kwinana West RCSN members toured the Lobster Shack facility and processing plant, and had an in-depth session on liming and acidity after high interest from the RCSN members in past meetings. RCSN members stayed at the Cervantes Pinnacle Resort and had a group dinner with the following guest speakers:

- **Chris Gazey** – Liming, quality, alternatives (DPIRD)
- **James Fisher** – developing an app/model for management of soil acidity (Desiree)
- **Dave Gartner and Dr Stephen Carr** – lime quality, messages, trials (AgLime).

In addition to the above presentations, Chris Wilkins (Western Panel) and Jo Wheeler (GRDC Grower Services Manager) also provided a GRDC and RCSN general business update.

The RCSN members then considered and voted on all ideas that had been gathered from the five growers they liaise with prior to each meeting; as well as any other topical and high priority issues that they had considered since last meeting. The top 10 ranked issues are listed in the table below.

**TABLE 1: Top 10 areas that Kwinana West port zone RCSN members ranked highly as impacting heavily on growers profitability (those in bold were further developed with MAKATs undertaken).**

ID #	Idea	Area	Further expansion by RCSN members on top issues
KW1	Weed Control	Crop protection	Biological control of weeds eg radish. Brome grass - management options/control measures. Looking more to biological controls of weeds, insects, disease.
<b>KW2</b>	<b>Summer Weeds</b>	<b>Crop protection</b>	<b>Better efficiency (ROI) with summer spraying (or other intervention) through clearer guidelines from decision making tools.</b>
<b>KW3</b>	<b>Summer Weeds</b>	<b>Agronomy</b>	<b>Research information and cost analysis on occasional tillage for summer weed control on soil structure and health across soil types.</b>
<b>KW4</b>	<b>Summer Weeds</b>	<b>Crop protection</b>	<b>Controlling summer weeds.</b>
<b>KW5</b>	<b>Summer Weeds</b>	<b>Innovation</b>	<b>Using technology. Can we use robotics with weed recognition sensors to target specific weeds and use direct injection technology with the herbicides.</b>
KW6	Machinery investments	Agribusiness	Managing the cost of machinery. Longevity, support, service. Machinery sharing options?
KW7	Business management	Agribusiness	Alternative business models for increasing size of operation, comparing purchase vs lease vs share farm vs full contract vs manage/contract. Managing variability within the season and how we respond to this variability?

ID #	Idea	Area	Further expansion by RCSN members on top issues
<b>KW8</b>	<b>Break crops and Rotations</b>	<b>Agronomy</b>	<b>Canola systems. Profitability of canola yield and disease break.</b>
<b>KW9</b>	<b>Break crops and Rotations</b>	<b>Agronomy</b>	<b>Lupins systems and agronomy.</b>
<b>KW10</b>	<b>Break crops and Rotations</b>	<b>Farming system</b>	<b>Collation of existing research information to identify gaps in knowledge of break crops.</b>
KW11	Frost	Farming system	High impact on profitability but not further developed at this time due to ongoing investment
KW12	Late N application for protein management	Nutrition	High impact on profitability but not further developed at this time due to ongoing investment
KW13	NVT using real world inputs ie district practice verses fully loaded	Nutrition	High impact on profitability but not further developed at this time due to ongoing investment
KW14	Compaction	Soils	Compaction mitigation on different soil types (sands no brainer, what about duplex soils?)
KW15	Non-wetting/gravels	Soils	Maybe looking into non-wetting in gravels or sandy gravels as a lot of work has been done on non-wetting sands. Forest gravels issues - high PRI, low Mn, non-wetting. Hard data on reeferator? Do I plough, spade, mouldboard or retire? Row spacing for non-wetting sands

Other issues were also brought up but were not as highly ranked; however all issues will continue to have presence at the RCSN discussion table and have been forwarded to the GRDC Western Panel for continued visibility as port zone related issues that may feed into existing or future initiatives.

**What Next?** All issues considered to be high ranking by the RCSN members will now be further defined; due diligence conducted on each area with regard to research conducted in the past, currently or in development (to avoid replication and to make best use of resources); and those areas which are still considered an issue will be further developed for possible project work. Also, vacancies that exist on the current RCSN have been readvertised with applications closing on 23 April 2018.

**Connect with Us.** GRDC now have a Facebook page – [www.facebook.com/theGRDC/](http://www.facebook.com/theGRDC/) (like us!) as well as a dedicated RCSN website – [www.rcsn.net.au](http://www.rcsn.net.au). Follow us on Twitter @Julianne\_Hill, or visit GRDC [www.grdc.com.au](http://www.grdc.com.au).

**The next meeting of the RCSN** will be on 2 August 2018 in Kulin (8am-5pm) with accommodation supplied for all RCSN members for the night of 1 August 2018 following Open Forums at:

- 31 July 2018 – Goomalling (2-6pm)
- 1 August 2018 – Brookton (8-11am) and
- 1 August 2018 - Kulin (2-6pm)

**Further queries?** Please call Julianne Hill (GRDC Regional Cropping Solutions Network Coordinator) on 0447 261 607 or email [regionalcroppingsolutions@gmail.com](mailto:regionalcroppingsolutions@gmail.com)